

Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 SAM-01

IO-11 DHA-02 ORM-02 OPR-02 A-01 PER-01 OC-05 CCO-00

AGR-05 /099 W

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O P 281017Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8354

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 0862

DELIVER TO NEA/ARN/DRAPER AT OPENING OF BUSINESS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: 0900 LEBANON REPORT

1. CEASEFIRE DOING WELL ALTHOUGH ISOLATED BREACHES WERE REPORTED YESTERDAY. MOST SERIOUS WAS AMBUSH OF ARMY ESCORT FOR FONMIN KHADDAM RETURNING FROM SYRIAN BORDER. TWO ARMY MEN WERE KILLED AND SEVEN WOUNDED. AMBUSH WAS BY "OTHER ARMY FORCES" REPORTEDLY LED BY A REBELLIOUS ARMY OFFICER FROM SIDON AREA WHO CLAIMS TO BE LEADING A NEW GROUP CALLED THE LEBANESE ARAB ARMY. HE IS A MOSLEM REBELLING AGAINST ARMY HIERARCHY. IT IS NOT CLEAR IF HIS GROUP IS RELATED TO MUTINY WHICH, ACCORDING TO OUR ARMY SOURCES, TOOK PLACE IN MASNA', LAST CHECKPOINT ON BORDER WITH SYRIA. THIS COULD BE FAIRLY SERIOUS REFLECTION OF GENERAL DISAFFECTION IN ARMY AND CONTINUING REPORTS OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHRISTIANS
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AND MOSLEMS, INCLUDING ONE ARMED CLASH A FEW DAYS

AGO IN WHICH A NUMBER OF ARMY PEOPLE WERE KILLED ON BOTH SIDES.

2. THERE WERE SOME ISOLATED INCIDENTS IN THE BEKAA, A RAID ON AN INTERNAL SECURITY FORCE HEADQUARTERS NEAR BEIRUT RIVER (PRESUMABLY CHRISTIAN RIGHTIST FORCES SEIZING ARMS), AND LOOTING OF SEVERAL FOODSTUFF FACTORIES BY PRESUMABLY HUNGRY PEOPLE. HEUD OF ICRC SPECIAL MISSION HERE TO DEAL WITH EMERGENCY CAUSED BY SOME 10,000 REFUGEES FROM MOSLEM QUARANTINA AND CHRISTIAN DAMOUR CALLED ON ME THIS MORNING REQUESTING USG'S SUPPORT; SEE SEPTTEL.

3. WITH KHADDAM IN DAMASCUS AND SHEHABI JUST REPOORTED TO BE MAKING QUICK TRIP TO ALGERIA, POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS HERE HAVE DWINDLED. FUTL CABINET WILL MEET THIS MORNING FOR FIRST TIME IN SEVERAL WEEKS. PRESS IS REPORTING THAT FRANGIE WILL NOT MAKE HIS ANNOUNCEMENT OF CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT UNTIL AFTER HE HAS TALKED WITH ASAD IN DAMASCUS. THERE IS SOME PRESS COVERAGE OF ENLARGED CABINET IN THE FUTURE, WITH POSSIBILITY THERE MAY BE AS MANY AS TWENTY-FOUR MEMBERS, MAINLY "TECHNICIANS", ALONG WITH A FEW TOP POLITICAL LEADERS.

4. EMBASSY PERSONNEL ALL SAFE. WE HAVE LESS THAN A HANDFUL OF OFFICIAL EVACUEES STILL TO GO. LAMBRAKIS

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